Assent forms can be either written or verbal and should take into account the ages of child recruited, and a reasonable effort to enable the child to understand what their participation will involve. If an adolescent is capable of signing a consent form, it should be written in language that is easily understood by that age/subject group. For older adolescents, this may mean that the assent form text is very similar to the parental consent form. If young children are involved who are not able to or unable to read, a verbal assent may be warranted. Either way, please keep in mind that the assent process means the child must actively show his/her willingness to participate, rather than just complying with directions or not resisting participation. The below is an example...if you feel that the text is too complicated for your subject group, please simplify accordingly.

Dear: [Recipient's name]:

My name is [Researcher's name]. I am a [professor or graduate student under the direction of (faculty advisor)] at California State University, Fullerton.

[The Study]: I am conducting a study to [explain purpose].

[Benefits/Risks]: If you agree you will be asked to [explain participation details and time required for activity and any other directions as needed]. Include a brief description of any benefit and/or justification to be derived from the work.

[If needed, provide additional information as it relates to instances of risks, stress or known discomforts (physical, psychological, social or legal) as a result of a participant's involvement in your study (i.e., you do not have to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable....]

[Confidentiality]: [Explain who will have access to information collected and whether or not parents will be entitled to view responses.] How will data be collected and stored, etc.

[Right to Refuse]: You do not have to be in this study and no one will be mad at you if you decide to not participate. Even if you start the study, you can stop at anytime and no one will be mad... Note: if you are offering compensation for participation this must be clarified (i.e., will child still be entitled to reward or treat offered for participation?) You must also explain, if applicable, that participant may not be allowed to drop out of normal classroom activities they would otherwise be required to perform. If applicable, an alternative activity must be described.

[Provide Contact Information]: You may ask questions about the study at anytime. [Explain who child may ask if they have questions, etc.]

__________ YES. I want to be in the study. I understand the study will be done (during normal teaching time and classroom routines, or otherwise...please explain!) I understand that even if I check “yes” now, I can change my mind later.

__________ NO. I do not want to be in the study.

Child’s name: _________________________  Signature: ____________________________

OR, IF ANONYMOUS DATA IS COLLECTED YOU MAY USE THE FOLLOWING:

By filling out the survey/questionnaire and returning it to [researcher] you are willing to be in this study.

Assentsample
07/2012